AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1 – 32. (Cancelled)

33.   (Currently Amended)   A distributed print management server that is connected to a plurality of printers through a network, divides print data into a plurality of print jobs and stores the print jobs in a print queue, wherein:

the distributed print management server:

identifies one of the plurality of print jobs as one print job to be printed;

broadcasts a print start notification to all printers;

receives print job acquisition requests from idle ones of the plurality of printers;

selects one printer from among the plurality of printers that have issued the print job acquisition requests, the one printer being most appropriate for the one print job based on printing capabilities and status information of the plurality of printers; and

assigns the one print job to the one printer by sending print data of the one print job to the one printer and sending a print wait notification to other printers of the plurality of printers, and

after the print job is successfully completed, the print job is removed from the print queue and notification of print job completion is made,

wherein the notification of print job completion is made one by one for each of the print jobs stored in the print queue,

after it is determined that the print queue is not empty, the distributed print management server repeats the identifying, broadcasting, receiving, selecting, and assigning steps for another one of the plurality of print jobs; and

after it is determined that the print queue is empty, the distributed print management server ends.

34.   (Previously Presented)   The distributed print management server according to claim 33, wherein the distributed print management server selects the one printer from among the plurality of printers based on which printer can complete the print job in a shortest time from warm-up.